

to procreation. It accounts for the readiness to commit suicide and for the indifference to martyrdom. Life was hardly worth having. He says that during the whole period of the empire there was no improvement in the useful arts, no new invention, and no new device to facilitate production. Neither was there any improvement in the art of war, in literature, or the fine arts. As to transportation and commerce there seems to have been gain in the first centuries of the Christian era.<sup>1</sup> Such inventions as were made required a very long time to work their way into general use. This sluggishness is most apparent in mental labor. After the time of Hadrian science cannot be said to have existed. The learned only cited their predecessors. Philosophy consisted in interpreting old texts. The only gains were in religion, and those all were won by Semites or other peoples of western Asia.<sup>2</sup> Both Greeks and Romans exterminated the *elite* of their societies, and pursued a policy which really was a selection of the less worthy.<sup>3</sup> Men fled from the world. They wanted to get out of human society. They especially wanted to escape the state. The reason was that they suffered pain in society, especially from the political institutions. The Christian church gave to this renunciation of social rights and duties the character of a religious virtue. "Pessimism took possession of the old peoples at the beginning of the Christian era. This world is regarded as delivered over to destruction. Men long for a better life and the immortality of the gods, outside of this transitory existence. To this sentiment corresponds the "division of the universe into a world of light above, the realm of the

good, and a world of darkness below, where the evil powers dwell. Men live in a middle space. Myths explained how our world arose as a mixture of good and evil, between the two realms of good and evil. Man belongs to both ; to the world of light by his soul, to the world of darkness by his body. Men struggle for redemption from this world and from carnality, and long to soar through the series of the heavens, so as to come before the face of the highest God, there

<sup>1</sup> Pohlmann, *Die Uebervolkerung d. Antiq. Grossstadte* ^ 12,

<sup>2</sup> Seeck, *Untergang der Antiq. Welt*, I, 258 ff., 278.

»Ibid., Chap. III.